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1882

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY

THE

JUL 3 1916

# INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

## SAMUEL ABBOTT GREEN,

MAYOR OF BOSTON,

TO THE

## CITY COUNCIL,

JANUARY 2, 1882.



BOSTON:

ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS,

No. 39 ARCH STREET.

1882.

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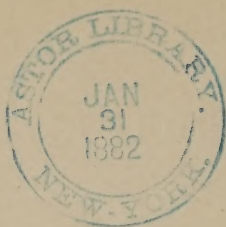
THE  
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OF  
SAMUEL ABBOTT GREEN,  
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BOSTON:  
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1882.

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1882

## CITY OF BOSTON.

---

IN COMMON COUNCIL, January 2, 1882.

*Ordered*, That His Honor the Mayor be requested to furnish a copy of his Address, that the same may be printed.

Passed. Sent up for concurrence.

W. P. GREGG,

*Clerk of the Common Council.*

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, January 10, 1882.

Passed in concurrence.

S. F. McCLEARY,

*City Clerk.*

2916 NY 10616 ex 1882 C-10





## ADDRESS.

---

*Gentlemen of the City Council:—*

A new Municipal Government is about to enter on its duties, and, in accordance with the long usage on such occasions, the Mayor delivers an inaugural address. Of late years it has been his custom to lay before the convention of the Board of Aldermen and the Common Council such suggestions and recommendations as he may see fit to make, besides giving the more important items from the reports of the several heads of departments.

With no intention to criticise the custom, it has seemed more in harmony with my own feelings to confine this address to the brief statement of a few topics. I do this the more readily, as my predecessor in office has so lately given an able review of the prominent features of a long administration; and in it he covers part of the ground which will soon claim our attention. Besides this, in an address before the last Board of Aldermen, at the end of the year, the Chairman has clearly set forth some matters having a close

connection with the business that will be brought before us. Both of these addresses are founded on long experience in municipal affairs, and contain much that is worthy of your attention. They will soon be printed and within the reach of every member of the City Government. Furthermore, the annual reports of the various chiefs of departments will appear at an early day, and be freely distributed.

These reports are drawn up with much care and fulness, and give, with all the accuracy of official authority, the details of the internal affairs of the city. Any suggestions and recommendations that I might make would necessarily be based largely on the statement of others, and I am reluctant to publish opinions taken at second hand, as my own deliberate convictions. Henceforth it will be my duty to become informed on these very points, and, in the language of the charter, "to communicate to both branches of the City Council all such information, and recommend all such measures as may tend to the improvement of the finances, the police, health, security, cleanliness, comfort, and ornament of the said city."

The condition of the city finances is of so much general interest that I enter at once upon its consideration. It is a subject of prime impor-



tance to the citizens of all classes. It fixes the rate of taxation and, in every household, affects the cost of living. The report of the Auditor of Accounts does not appear for several months to come, and for this reason I give, in some detail, a statement of the financial affairs of the city as they stood on December 31, 1881; though it does not include the large amounts recently appropriated by the votes of the City Council for public parks.

## CITY DEBT.

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Gross debt, December 31, 1880 . . .   | \$41,103,750 60        |
| Add permanent debt issued in 1881 . . .   | 39,000 00              |
| Temporary debt of 1882 . . . . .  | 84,000 00              |
|   | <hr/>                  |
|   | \$41,226,750 60        |
| Deduct debt paid during 1881 . . . . .  | 1,208,152 58           |
|   | <hr/>                  |
| Gross debt, December 31, 1881 . . . . .   | \$40,018,598 02        |
| Sinking Funds, Dec. 31, 1881 . . . . .  | \$13,938,402 07        |
| Receipts during 1881 . . . . .  | 2,326,921 07           |
|   | <hr/>                  |
|   | \$16,265,323 14        |
| Payments during 1881 . . . . .  | 1,209,257 41           |
|   | <hr/>                  |
|   | \$15,056,065 73        |
| Bonds and mortgages, the pay-<br>ments on which are pledged to<br>the payment of debt . . . . . | 714,485 69             |
|   | <hr/>                  |
| Total redemption means, December 31, 1881 . . . . .   | 15,770,551 42          |
|   | <hr/>                  |
| Net debt, December 31, 1881 . . . . .   | <u>\$24,248,046 60</u> |

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Gross debt, December 31, 1880 . . . . . | \$41,103,750 60       |
| “ “ “ 31, 1881 . . . . .                | 40,018,598 02         |
| Decrease . . . . .                      | <u>\$1,085,152 08</u> |

|                                       |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Net debt, December 31, 1880 . . . . . | \$26,658,456 41       |
| “ “ “ 31, 1881 . . . . .              | 24,248,046 60         |
| Decrease . . . . .                    | <u>\$2,410,409 81</u> |

City debt, including balances of debt assumed by

|                                 |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| acts of annexation . . . . .    | \$27,260,324 04        |
| Cochituate Water debt . . . . . | 11,631,273 98          |
| Mystic Water debt . . . . .     | 1,127,000 00           |
|                                 | <u>\$40,018,598 02</u> |

Loans authorized but not issued —

*By City Council of 1877.*

|                                 |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| For improved sewerage . . . . . | \$981,000 00 |
|---------------------------------|--------------|

*By City Council of 1881.*

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| For additional supply of water . . . . .   | \$324,000 00          |
| Widening Portland street . . . . .         | 300,000 00            |
| “ South street . . . . .                   | 185,000 00            |
| “ Kneeland street . . . . .                | 180,000 00            |
| West Roxbury Park . . . . .                | 600,000 00            |
| City Point “ . . . . .                     | 100,000 00            |
| East Boston “ . . . . .                    | 50,000 00             |
| Charles river embankment . . . . .         | 300,000 00            |
| Muddy river improvement . . . . .          | 200,000 00            |
| Arnold Arboretum . . . . .                 | 60,000 00             |
| Additional land, Public Library, . . . . . | 150,000 00            |
|  | <u>2,449,000 00</u>   |
|  | <u>\$3,430,000 00</u> |

By the action of the City Council at the end of last year, Boston is committed to a system of public parks. During several years the subject has been thoroughly discussed, both in public and in private, and the only argument urged against it was the cost. Nearly every large city in this country or in Europe has its park, or series of parks, and Boston will soon stand abreast of them. There are many sanitary reasons in favor of the system, and whatever favors sound health leads to good morals. Tending in the same direction are other arguments which I will not specify. If we have the needful means, it is enough for us to know that such improvements are demanded by the public. At the same time the tax-payers have a right to hold their servants to a strict account of the manner in which the appropriations for the object are spent. I am fully aware that this action of the last City Council does not closely concern us now, but a caution in regard to the expenditure of money is always timely. Fortunately nature has done so much for this wide-spread territory that there is little need of a great outlay at once, and the more expensive improvements can be put off without detriment to the public interests. By the terms of the vote authorizing the establishment



of the parks, the land will be placed under the charge of the Park Commissioners; and the city may well congratulate itself that it has three citizens who enjoy the entire confidence of the community, and, at the same time, are willing, without salary, to assume the care and responsibility of this high trust. I have referred to the matter because other appropriations will be required for this object, and during a period when large sums of money are voted for public purposes there is a tendency to grow careless of the economical use of it. The average mind becomes accustomed to unusual amounts, and money is often spent without due foresight.

It may be well to remind you that, in the course of a few years, a large part of the Franklin Fund will be available by the city for a purpose kindred to public parks. Dr. Benjamin Franklin died in the year 1790, bequeathing to his native town of Boston one thousand pounds, to be lent to young married artificers, upon certain conditions; and he expected that this sum, in one hundred years, would increase to a very large amount. It was his wish, as expressed in his will, that, at the end of this time, one hundred thousand pounds should be spent upon "public works which may be judged of most general utility to the inhabitants, such

as fortifications, bridges, aqueducts, public buildings, baths, pavements, or whatever may make living in the town more convenient to its people, and render it more agreeable to strangers resorting thither for health or a temporary residence." Applying this money toward the embellishment of Boston, under certain conditions, would certainly be in accordance with the expressed desire of Franklin, and would leave the way clear to give the name of the great printer, philosopher, and statesman to one of the new parks. In no other way could the bequest be made to subserve so well the convenience of the whole people.

Your attention is earnestly called to the public schools. No subject will be brought to your notice, of greater interest to the citizens, or of more vital importance. Education is the very bulwark of our political liberties. There is no power so actively at work in welding together the tastes, instincts and feelings of the whole people, without regard to social distinctions, as our system of public instruction; and with the growth of our city in population and material prosperity, it becomes a matter of increasing importance to cherish every institution which shall tend to enlarge the interests and sympathies common to the entire community. Through her whole history

Boston has been liberal toward her schools, and the tax-payers are always willing that the necessary appropriations should be made in order to support them.

According to the school census of May last the number of children in the city, between five and fifteen years of age, was sixty-one thousand and fifty-six; and of this number forty-seven thousand seven hundred and thirty-two were taught in the public schools, and six thousand nine hundred and twenty-two in private schools. In June last the following schools were supported by the city:—one Normal, ten Latin and High, fifty Grammar and four hundred and eighteen Primary schools. Besides these there were what are termed the special schools, comprising an evening high school, a school for deaf-mutes, two schools for licensed minors, six evening drawing schools, and seventeen evening schools. The average number of pupils attending these special classes was three thousand one hundred and fifty-three. These different schools, general and special, required a force of twelve hundred and seventy-six teachers, of whom one hundred and ninety-eight were men, and one thousand and seventy-eight were women.

The appropriations made by the City Council



for public schools during the present financial year amounted to \$1,415,760. The expenditure of the year, thus far, as compared with that of the corresponding nine months of last year, shows a decrease of \$18,608.34. It is a gratifying fact to note that the expenses of the schools of late have been steadily decreasing, although the number of pupils has increased at the rate of over one thousand each year.

A fit supplement to the question of schools is the Public Library, and I would earnestly bespeak your careful attention to its needs. It is to-day the largest library in the country, and its use increases with its growth. Our system of public education culminates wisely in an institution of this kind.

There are various other subjects connected with the municipal government, which I omit to mention; though it is not because I fail to appreciate their importance. In the natural course of official duties your attention will soon be called to them, and they will receive, I doubt not, your careful consideration.

*Gentlemen of the City Council:*—Our work is now begun. Let us show by our actions, rather than by our words, that we appreciate the high

responsibility resting on us. Let us do our duty without regard to party or faction, and with sole reference to the good of the city. If we enter upon our labors in this spirit, we may well leave the result to a kind Providence.

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

ALBERT PALMER,

MAYOR OF BOSTON,

TO THE

CITY COUNCIL,

JANUARY 1, 1883.



BOSTON:

ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS.

No. 39 ARCH STREET.

1883.



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THE  
INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
OF  
ALBERT PALMER,  
MAYOR OF BOSTON,  
TO THE  
CITY COUNCIL,  
JANUARY 1, 1883.



BOSTON:  
ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS,  
No. 39 ARCH STREET,  
1883.

CITY OF BOSTON:

---

IN COMMON COUNCIL, January 1, 1883.

*Ordered*, That His Honor the Mayor be requested to furnish a copy of his Address, that the same may be printed.

Sent up for concurrence.

W. P. GREGG,

*Clerk of the Common Council.*

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, January 8, 1883.

Concurred.

HUGH O'BRIEN,

*Chairman.*

A true copy.

Attest:

JOHN T. PRIEST,

*Asst. City Clerk.*

## A D D R E S S .

---

*Gentlemen of the City Council:—*

The people of Boston have committed to our custody and care for the ensuing year all those manifold municipal interests on the wise guardianship and prudent administration whereof so much of their moral and material prosperity depends. Remembering that by far the heavier portion of the total burden of taxation is levied for the support of the City Government, and that its authority more nearly touches the daily life of this great metropolis—now including within its corporate jurisdiction one-fifth of the total population of the Commonwealth—than either the State or the Federal government, we cannot but feel that the confidence thus reposed in us carries with it responsibilities which require at our hands the most diligent, careful, and constant attention.

There is, happily, no need for me to emphasize these responsibilities. Coming directly from the people, and chosen at a period when the popular mood is unmistakably disposed to hold public servants to strict accountability in all their dealings



with the public business, we are not likely to forget that the powers delegated to us by our fellow-citizens must be used for the benefit of the whole city, with an eye single to the conservation of all her varied interests, and the growth and improvement of all her public institutions; to the end that we may transfer to our successors, unimpaired, that noble fabric of civic government which has made Boston, in many respects, the model municipality of this continent. In the heat necessarily engendered by our annual elections we sometimes hear a note of alarm raised, lest the government of the city should fall into reckless hands, and the polity which has made it a pattern for other communities suffer from violent and ill-considered change. With each recurring year this apprehension, it is gratifying to observe, grows fainter and less potent. In a time of great public blessings, when the mercies of Providence are being dispensed to us with a bountiful hand, let us not esteem it the least of them that we are citizens of a metropolis that has no "dangerous classes" of any considerable strength, and needs not, as do some of the cities of older civilizations, to lie down in terror and rise up in dread of its own inhabitants.

The ballot-boxes of Boston are the registries, let us never forget, of the will of a community

in which intelligence is general, education common and free, and culture widely diffused. In such a community it is impossible that there should ever be an aristocracy of virtue, or a monopoly of public spirit, so limited in numbers as to be outvoted by the vicious or sordid elements of society. This is a tranquillizing reflection, and should teach us to listen with untroubled ears to those civic pessimists who occasionally conjure up, for transient campaign purposes, the grim spectre of a Boston in which the majority of our fellow-citizens shall become incapable or unworthy longer to exercise the rights of freemen and perform the work of self-government. One of the ablest of the later chief magistrates of this city took occasion, just five years since, to discuss in his inaugural address this phase of our future as a municipality. He spoke then, as I speak now, after a city canvass of unwonted warmth, in which the same apprehensions to which I have alluded, touching the possible occupation of this Hall by a vicious body of elective officials, had been very freely and sharply, and by some, doubtless, sincerely, expressed. Speaking of the proposition that had then been mooted in some quarters, and which has recently been revived, of "attempting to raise the standard of municipal gov-

ernment by a limitation of the suffrage," Mayor Pierce said from this desk, "Such legislation would be contrary to the traditions, the education, and the practice of our people." I take pleasure in emphasizing, under circumstances strongly analogous, that opinion of my distinguished predecessor. I am moved, indeed, to go farther, and assert my conviction that the finger-posts on the road of Reform all point the other way, and direct us to an enlargement, rather than a contraction, of the suffrage, as the true remedy for the evils that now admittedly taint the character, by debasing the methods, of our annual elections. The strength of the social order, and of any government by which it is preserved, is like the strength of the pyramid, proportioned to the breadth of its base. To every student of our electoral system it must be increasingly obvious with each succeeding election, that the greatest evil that vitiates its purity and its honesty, and imperils its usefulness as a means to the end of good government, is the employment of money to secure the success of candidates, whether of one party or the other, in sums so large as to far exceed the limit of legitimate political expenditures.

## THE POLL-TAX QUALIFICATION.

Nor is there any doubt that the restrictions now imposed upon our municipal suffrage offer a ready and convenient means for this process of political debauchery, if they do not actually invite it. Section 57 of the City Charter, following the Constitution of the State, provides that every male citizen who, being otherwise qualified, "shall have paid by himself or his parent, master, or guardian, any State or county tax, which . . . shall have been assessed upon him in any town or district in this Commonwealth," shall be entitled to vote at the municipal election; and that, unless by law exempted from taxation, no other person shall be so entitled. This is what is popularly known as the poll-tax qualification. In view of the twice-declared will of the people of this city I venture to recommend to you that the General Court be petitioned for the passage of an act so amending the Charter as to make manhood suffrage the basis of our municipal government, free from all restrictions except such as are necessary to test the intelligence of the voter. This proposed reform is often loosely spoken of as a movement for the abolition of the poll-tax. I cannot accept such a definition of it. The propriety and justice



of the poll-tax, considered purely and simply as a demand upon every citizen to contribute to the support of the institutions in whose benefits he shares, have never, to my knowledge, been seriously called in question. Assuredly I shall not question them. Equal burdens are the natural corollaries of equal rights, and I would not be understood for a moment to assail the poll-tax as a tax. It seems to me, on the contrary, to be an equitable impost, and one whose regular collection, by any and all proper and lawful means, legitimate for the collection of any other kind of tax or debt, would and should command the cheerful acquiescence of all good citizens. But there exists no justification either of good morals or of wise policy for making the "right preservative of all rights," the right to the ballot, dependent either upon the levying or the payment of taxes. To do so is to establish in essence and in fact a property qualification for voting, and, as has been well said, revises and reverses the ancient rallying cry of the Revolution, so as to make it read, "No representation without taxation."

This is not the time or place for any extended argument touching the fundamental right of every citizen to cast one free, unintimidated, and untaxed

vote. We have to do with the great question of free or taxed suffrage only in so far as it touches our own municipal business; and if you agree with me that the poll-tax qualification opens the door to bribery and corruption, — and instead of purging the franchise, as it was intended to do, actually stimulates its prostitution by mercenary men, besides being in its essence an unjust and unjustifiable abridgment of the natural right of representation, — then, I trust, you will make the voice of the city on this subject heard in the Legislature in such manner as you may deem to be most practicable, pertinent, and potent.

#### THE REGISTRATION LAWS.

Closely connected with this topic are the laws governing the registration of voters, which, as they at present exist, throw serious impediments in the way of the exercise of the freeman's right by large numbers of our fellow-citizens. We are all agreed, of course, that it is necessary to surround the ballot-box with proper and sufficient safeguards against fraud; but it would seem that this end could be obtained without imposing such conditions upon the suffrage as practically operate to disfranchise large numbers of voters. The process by which thousands of names of qualified voters are annually dropped

from the lists, only to be restored at a considerable and onerous sacrifice of time and effort on the part of the individuals thus excluded from the register, constitutes a genuine grievance, which bears with peculiar hardship upon a large number of the people of our city. The closing of the lists a full fortnight before the holding of our annual election also seems to me to be an unnecessary and unjust limitation of the rights of electors; and, in view of the fact that it is not generally imposed upon the voters of other cities and towns of the Commonwealth, I submit to you that it is a discrimination against the people of Boston which ought not longer to exist. I suggest to you the propriety, therefore, of making the modification of the registration laws, also, the subject of action before the General Court.

#### ELECTIONS.

Before leaving this domain of fundamental law I will venture to submit one further proposal to your consideration. By Chapter 140 of the Statutes of 1872, amending the original Charter in that respect, the day for holding our annual municipal election is fixed on the Tuesday after the second Monday of December. The complaint is made, and not without reason, that the frequent recurrence

of election days, and the almost incessant turmoil of the canvasses which precede them, too much distract and disturb the business of the country and deprive it of that condition of political quietude which is so necessary to its highest prosperity. I believe that an amendment of the statute to which I have referred, so as to direct the collection of the votes of our citizens for municipal and state officers on the same day, would be received with satisfaction both by business men and working men, affording to both classes a welcome relief from the unnecessary burden of two exciting campaigns, one of which follows close upon the heels of the other. If this change could be effected the newly chosen Mayor would have the advantage of ample time in which to acquaint himself with the status of the city's business, and would not have, as at present, to offer to the City Council on this annual occasion such hurriedly formed views and rapidly digested information as a necessarily brief examination of the work of the departments qualifies him to present.

#### THE CITY'S FINANCES.

Leaving these and all other matters that touch the organic law of this municipality to your wise discretion, I desire now to direct your attention to



the city's financial affairs. The Auditor of Accounts has prepared a statement of them up to December 31, 1882, which, anticipating as it does his annual report, I think it proper to append for the general information and as a matter of record.

## CITY DEBT.

|   |              |                 |                        |
|---|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Gross funded debt, December 31, 1881            | .            | .               | \$39,934,598 02        |
| Temporary debt, Dec. 31, 1881                   | ..           | .               | 84,000 00              |
|   |              |                 | <u>\$40,018,598 02</u> |
| Add funded debt, issued in 1882, \$1,981,500 00 |              |                 |                        |
| Temporary debt, issued in                       |              |                 |                        |
| 1882  | .            | .               | 97,000 00              |
|   |              |                 | <u>2,078,500 00</u>    |
|   |              |                 | \$42,097,098 02        |
| Deduct funded debt paid in 1882,                | \$907,520 14 |                 |                        |
| Temporary debt paid in 1882,                    | 84,000 00    |                 |                        |
|   |              |                 | <u>991,520 14</u>      |
| Gross debt, Dec. 31, 1882                       | .            | .               | \$41,105,577 88        |
| Sinking Funds, Dec. 31, 1881                    | .            | \$15,056,065 73 |                        |
| Receipts during 1882.                           | .            | 1,920,737 53    |                        |
|   |              |                 | <u>\$16,976,803 26</u> |
| Payments during 1882                            | .            | 908,772 84      |                        |
|   |              |                 | <u>\$16,068,030 42</u> |
| Bonds and mortgages, the pay-                   |              |                 |                        |
| ments on which are pledged to                   |              |                 |                        |
| the payment of debt                             | .            | 656,522 44      |                        |
| Total redemption means, Dec. 31, 1882           | .            | 16,724,552 86   |                        |
| Net debt, Dec. 31, 1882                         | ..           | .               | <u>\$24,381,025 02</u> |

|                                     |                       |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Gross debt, Dec. 31, 1882 . . . . . | \$41,105,577 88       |
| Gross debt, Dec. 31, 1881 . . . . . | 40,018,598 02         |
| Increase . . . . .                  | <u>\$1,086,979 86</u> |

|                                   |                     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Net debt, Dec. 31, 1882 . . . . . | \$24,381,025 02     |
| Net debt, Dec. 31, 1881 . . . . . | 24,248,046 60       |
| Increase . . . . .                | <u>\$132,978 42</u> |

City debt, including balance of debt assumed by

|                                 |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| acts of annexation . . . . .    | \$28,123,303 90        |
| Cochituate Water debt . . . . . | 11,955,273 98          |
| Mystic Water debt . . . . .     | 1,027,000 00           |
|                                 | <u>\$41,105,577 88</u> |

Loans authorized, but not issued:—

*By City Council of 1877:—*

|                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| For Improved Sewerage . . . . . | \$28,500 00 |
|---------------------------------|-------------|

*By City Council of 1881:—*

|                                     |                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| For West Roxbury Park . . . . .     | \$600,000 00        |  |
| City Point Park . . . . .           | 100,000 00          |  |
| East Boston Park . . . . .          | 50,000 00           |  |
| Charles River Embankment, . . . . . | 300,000 00          |  |
| Muddy River Improvement. . . . .    | 200,000 00          |  |
| Arnold Arboretum . . . . .          | 60,000 00           |  |
| Widening Kneeland Street . . . . .  | 60,000 00           |  |
|                                     | <u>1,370,000 00</u> |  |

*By City Council of 1882:—*

|                                 |                       |  |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| For Improved Sewerage . . . . . | \$1,500,000 00        |  |
| Warren Bridge . . . . .         | 400,000 00            |  |
|                                 | <u>1,900,000 00</u>   |  |
|                                 | <u>\$3,298,500 00</u> |  |

The following shows the debt and valuation for two years, also the debt and valuation per capita, based on the census (362,839) of 1880:—

|       | Gross Debt.     | Debt<br>per Capita. | Valuation.    | Valuation<br>per Capita. |
|-------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1881, | \$40,018,598 92 | \$110 29            | \$665,554,600 | \$1,834 29               |
| 1882, | 41,105,577 88   | 113 28              | 672,490,100   | 1,853 41                 |

From the above it will be seen that, while the debt has been increased  $2\frac{7}{10}$  per cent., the taxable property has increased but  $1\frac{4}{100}$  per cent.

Of the total debt issued during the year (\$2,078,500),  $90\frac{53}{100}$  per cent. was authorized in previous years.

#### THE DEMAND FOR ECONOMY.

I doubt not that you fully share with me a realizing sense of the popular demand for a strictly economic administration of the city's business in all its departments. The mandate of our constituents, on this point, is clear and emphatic. That eminent English essayist, Dr. Johnson, writing of individual economy, uses language which may be appropriately applied to a civic corporation, without the change of a syllable: "Frugality," he says, "may be termed the daughter of prudence, the sister of temperance, and the parent of liberty. He that is extravagant will quickly become poor, and poverty will enforce dependence and invite corruption." It is a main

security of popular government — alike in nation, state, or city, where, as with us, it rests on the suffrages of an intelligent and well-informed electorate — that the great mass of voters entertain a profound and deep-rooted aversion to wasteful expenditures. The few may be, and history teaches us that they often have been, tempted to promote large enterprises at the public expense, without a considerate calculation of the outlay involved; but the many, conscious that the burdens of taxation always press, in the final analysis, most heavily upon their shoulders, are the natural enemies of extravagance and the steadfast friends of frugality. I would remind you that the aggregate of our annual appropriations for the past three years has steadily increased. The appropriation bill, for 1880–81, was for \$10,190,387; for the year 1881–82, it touched the still higher figure of \$10,475,081; and for the current fiscal year of 1882–83 it foots up to the yet larger aggregate of \$11,054,535. It is imperative, therefore, that the appropriations for this year should be made with all due caution and circumspection, if a moderate rate of taxation is to be secured. Nor is it superfluous to remark that, whatever vagueness of responsibility for the appropriations and expenditures of previous years may have existed, there can and there will be no

doubt where, nor upon whom, the tax-payers will fasten the accountability for any waste of the public money during the year upon which we are now entering. You will not expect that I should be able, in the short time given to me to examine the business of the various departments, to indicate, at this time, with precision and in detail, where the work of retrenchment may be properly and legitimately begun. I rely with confidence upon your sagacity and firmness in the scrutiny of all expenditures, as the occasions for making them shall arise, and you may certainly rely, in your turn, upon my loyal and hearty coöperation at all times for the purpose of redeeming our pledge to the people that all their municipal business shall be transacted with the same prudent economy with which we transact our own.

#### FALSE AND TRUE ECONOMY.

The reports of the several departments will be presented to you in due course, and it will be your duty to scrutinize them carefully wherever an expenditure of the public money is proposed. Nevertheless, in the management of the affairs of a great city, it is important that we distinguish between false and true economy. In one of his



famous "Letters to a Noble Lord," Burke lays down these wise maxims: "Expense and great expense may be an essential part of true economy. . . . Economy is a distributive virtue, and consists not in saving, but in selection. Parsimony requires no prudence, no sagacity, no powers of combination, no comparison, no judgment. Mere instinct, and that not an instinct of the noblest kind, may produce this false economy in perfection. The other economy has larger views. It demands a discriminating judgment, and a firm, sagacious mind." Gentlemen of the Council, it is not in the spirit of parsimony, but of that true economy which Burke thus admirably defined, that the people of Boston expect us to transact their business.

#### THE COMMISSIONS.

Since the adoption of the present City Charter it has been amended by a large number of special acts, which have had the effect to work a silent but marked transformation in the character of our municipal government. It has often been pointed out that the City Council exerts a far stronger control over the public purse-strings than the Mayor, although the people, partly from the force of a habit acquired in earlier days, and partly from their invari-

able tendency to seize upon some single and conspicuous mark for their disapproval, and ignore those finer distinctions and nicer refinements of reasoning which are necessary to be made in correctly balancing the scales of justice, are still disposed to place to the credit of the executive for the time being the lion's share of responsibility for any increase in the rate of taxation that may occur during his term. But, under the special statutes to which I have alluded, neither the Mayor by himself, nor the City Council by itself, nor both acting in concert, can any longer exercise that immediate and close supervision, or that direct and effective control, which they were formerly able to exercise over the great spending departments. The City Government of Boston is still in theory a government by elective officers, but in practice it has largely become a government by appointive officers. Most of our larger municipal departments are committed to the keeping of Commissions. We have a Water Board, a Police Commission, a Fire Commission, a Park Commission, a Street Commission, a Board of Health, and several unpaid Commissions. These bodies are the practical managers of the great bulk of our affairs, whatever may be the theoretic checks imposed upon them in the statutes by which they were created. In the main, and speaking broadly, they have been

composed thus far of capable and efficient officers, who have rendered to the city, in their several departments, faithful and valuable service. Nevertheless it is open to serious question whether these Commissions, as at present organized, are either as efficient or economic administrators of the business committed to their charge as it is desirable they should be. The opinion widely prevails that some of them exercise a variety of incongruous powers, all of which ought not to be vested in the same body; while in their multiplicity, and the stereotyped adherence, in every case, to the trinitarian basis of construction, it is very generally believed that there is employed a larger aggregate number of these officials, involving a correspondingly large addition to the salary list of the city, than is really necessary for the business-like conduct of the affairs thus divided, and needlessly subdivided, among them.

It is not at all clear to me that it is wise or profitable to insist upon a City Commission, in every case, consisting of three members. There are objections, too, of considerable weight and force, to the joint jurisdiction now exercised by one Commission over the police and the license system; and it would be, in the judgment of many citizens, wise to place the supervision of these two distinct branches of our municipal business in the hands of

separate, distinct, and distinctly independent authorities. I have not yet been able to give that mature consideration to this important subject, of the relations of the City Government to its Commissions, which would enable me to make any definite and specific recommendation. I content myself, therefore, for the present, with inviting your attention to the subject, in this general way, and suggesting to you an inquiry into the workings of the various Commissions, and the feasibility and desirability of consolidating and reorganizing them, and so revising their functions, and reducing their membership, as to increase their effective working-powers, and at the same time decrease their cost to the tax-payers. Such an examination, I believe, would justify the application to the Legislature for a grant of authority to the City Council to reconstruct the Commissions, and distribute their powers, as in its judgment the public welfare may demand.

#### WATER SUPPLY.

There is one subject which seems to me to call for special attention and speedy action. I refer to the water supply. The Cochituate Water-Works have cost the city up to December 1, 1882, \$17,109,825.84; the Mystic Water-Works, to same date, \$1,638,556.16.

This is a large expenditure, considered positively, and comparatively considered as against the cost of like works in other cities, it is very large. The annual cost of the maintenance of these originally expensive works is also very high as compared with the same item in the accounts of other cities. This generous outlay of the public money has not been grudgingly made, and if its object, which was to obtain an abundant supply of pure water for the inhabitants of this great and rapidly growing metropolis, were only secured, it is not likely that we should hear any serious complaints from the people. It appears, however, that the supply cannot be regarded as abundant, and there is, to say the least, grave doubts as to its purity. After so lavish an expenditure of money it is not agreeable to find that neither in the quantity nor the quality of our water do we enjoy that assured preëminence among American cities which such a liberal policy, both in the construction and maintenance of our water-works fairly encouraged us to expect. The latest report of the Water Board emphasizes the need of still further enlarging the capacity of the works, to meet the growing demands of water-takers. It also calls attention to the alarming waste of water which is going on in the city, and to which no effective check



has yet been applied. The statistics of our daily consumption of water are indeed startling. They establish the fact that we are consuming an average of 92 gallons per day *per capita*.

When it is stated that the average daily consumption *per capita* in Brooklyn is but 54 gallons; in Providence 36 gallons,—to take examples from among other American cities; while, among English cities, London and Liverpool consume only 27 gallons per day, per head of population, it needs no argument to show that a consumption of 92 gallons per day in Boston must cover a very large percentage of sheer waste (estimated by competent judges at 50 per cent. of the total amount), to which it is our duty, as soon as possible, to put a stop. Unless this exhaustingly wasteful draft upon our present resources shall soon cease many years cannot elapse before new sources of supply must be sought, and new works undertaken, at a cost to the tax-payers that will be reckoned by millions. Still more serious and urgent are the complaints, that are now made with increasing frequency, of the impure condition of the water. During last summer it is notorious that immense quantities of drinking-water were brought into Boston, from suburban springs, and eagerly bought by thousands of citizens who were un-

willing to drink the water supplied to them by the city at such a heavy annual cost. These patent causes of the current dissatisfaction with our water supply are, in any aspect, of the first importance. Their removal is demanded, not only in the interest of economy, but in the still higher interest of the public health. In this view of it the matter is one that nearly touches not only the comfort and convenience, but the very lives, of the people. All competent authorities are agreed that there is no more prolific source of peril to the public health than the use of impure drinking-water. On sanitary, as well as economic grounds, I feel it my duty, therefore, to earnestly urge upon you to adopt such action as in your wisdom may seem best calculated to secure to all the inhabitants of this city an ample supply of pure, wholesome, and healthful water, and to prevent its wasteful consumption. A Commission appointed by the last City Government, in September, 1882, is now examining this difficult and important subject, and its early report is awaited with eager interest.

#### STREETS.

In the past five years large amounts have been expended, and judiciously expended, in notable im-

provements of our public streets. Such improvements which directly increase the business facilities of the city should never be regarded from the stand-point of a narrow and short-sighted economy. Nevertheless, in view of the large expenditures involved in this class of improvements, I deem it my duty to urge upon you that the laying out of new streets during the coming year should only be undertaken where their public utility clearly calls for their construction.

The amount expended upon streets during the past year is as follows:—

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Laying out and widening . . . . .  | \$769,581 09   |
| Construction and maintenance (from Jan. 1 to<br>Dec. 20, 1882) . . . . . | \$1,082,595 52 |

#### LAMP DEPARTMENT.

The cost of this department for the past year was \$438,191.08.

The contracts with all the gas corporations and electric lighting companies expire during the year; and it is expected that contracts with the gas companies can be renewed at a reduced price, as such a reduction for private consumers has already been announced by several corporations, to take effect January 1, 1883.

There are 13,000 public street-lights, of various kinds, in the streets and ways of the city. The illumination of some of our most frequented streets by large gas-lights, or the electric light, meets with popular favor, and should be continued and judiciously increased.

It is hoped that, with the expected reduction in the price of gas, any increase in the appropriation for the department the present year may be avoided.

#### POLICE.

The Police Department will ask you for a steam-launch, to patrol the twenty-two miles of wharves now inadequately protected by the harbor police in row-boats. This seems to be a necessary increase of our police facilities. The telephone and electric-signal system may also, I think, be applied with great advantage to the general efficiency of this department. The Police Commissioners report that the policemen of Boston are in a state of excellent discipline, and that their service during the year has been faithful and efficient.

#### THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

The protection of life and property from loss by fire is another important municipal concern.

The value of property destroyed by fire in the city, during the past eleven months, aggregates \$625,000. I cordially indorse the recommendation of the Fire Commissioners, that some action should be taken to require manufacturers, who employ large numbers of workingmen and women in the upper stories of buildings, to provide adequate and ample means of escape in case of fire. An estimate, in which I have confidence, places the number of persons thus employed in our city at about 50,000.

The lives of so large a number of persons should not be left, as in so many buildings at present, to the mercy of chance and good fortune; but their safety should, so far as human prevision and provision can effect it, be fully ensured. The report of the Fire Commissioners will, I understand, urge upon you the need of a larger and better lighted repair-shop, for which the land has been already set apart. This repair-shop, it is affirmed, has saved thousands of dollars to the tax-payers since its establishment; and if it shall appear to you that the investment proposed to be made, in building a newer and better one, would result in a still further saving of the public money in years to come, I doubt not that it will commend itself to your approval as a measure of true economy.



## PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

The Board of Directors of Public Institutions will again urge upon you the necessity of constructing extensions to the various buildings in which the poor of the city are housed and cared for. Their proposition for a consolidation of the institutions in which we provide for these unfortunates will also, no doubt, be renewed, and this seems to me to be emphatically a case in which true economy demands that the exigencies of the future shall have their due weight in determining your action.

## PARKS.

Work on the Back Bay Park is steadily progressing, and the land for the East Boston Park has been purchased. The Arnold Arboretum, and other lands in connection therewith, have also been taken, and a lease concluded with the President and Fellows of Harvard College, agreeable to the provisions of the special act for that purpose and the orders of the City Council in relation thereto. Appropriations will be asked to carry on this work. I trust that in making them you will not permit the tax-levy for the next fiscal year to be overburdened by an unduly large proportion of the total

outlay for our park system, which will require years to develop and complete.

A Park System, in general outlines, is now established, and it is safe to say that it meets with a generous approval. The general management of the great work is in the hands of a Commission competent for the service, and the public may feel assured that the several parts of the system will receive impartial attention. It is well known that the service of the Commission is gratuitous, and it ought to be equally well known that it is highly appreciated.

#### THE NEW SEWERAGE SYSTEM.

The city is to be congratulated on the approaching completion of the New and Improved System of Sewerage. Speaking generally it may be said that the whole system will be sufficiently advanced during the coming year to be made available for removing the most noticeable causes of nuisance in our present sewerage system. There will then remain to be built extensions of the intercepting sewers, to take the sewage from the north end of the city proper and the easterly portions of South Boston.

The work thus far has cost somewhat more

than was at first estimated, owing to the greatly enhanced prices of labor and materials since the preliminary estimates were made. As there seems to be no probability that prices will much further advance, the cost of future work should not exceed the more recent estimates and appropriations. The total expenditures chargeable to this account, including the draft for January, 1883, is \$3,388,045.89.

#### THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

The general health of Boston, it is gratifying to observe, compares favorably with that of other cities. We have enjoyed entire immunity from epidemics during the past year, and the death-rate has fallen below the average rate for many years past. The report of the Board of Health will apprise you in detail of the work of this important department, and, I doubt not, that if it has any new propositions to submit to you for still further guarding the public health, they will receive, as they deserve, your prompt and earnest consideration.

#### SCHOOLS.

I would especially emphasize the distinction already drawn between parsimony and true econ-

omy in our dealings with the educational interests of the city, as to which I shall be pardoned, I hope, if I speak with some degree of personal interest and sympathy. There is no Boston interest so dear to all her people, without distinction of class, creed, or party, as her public schools. Of all the undying words penned or spoken by Macaulay, there are none which have exerted a more potent or permanent charm, in my reading of that great publicist, than one which occurs in a speech which he delivered on education, in 1847, in which he pays this glowing tribute to our beloved Commonwealth: "Go back," says Macaulay, "to the days when the little society, which has expanded into the opulent and enlightened Commonwealth of Massachusetts, began to exist. . . . One of the earliest laws enacted by the Puritan colonists was that every township, as soon as the Lord had increased it to the number of fifty houses, should appoint one to teach all children to read and write, and that every township of a hundred houses should set up a grammar school. Nor have the descendants of those who made this law ever ceased to hold that the public authorities were bound to provide the means of public instruction. Nor is this doctrine confined to New England. 'Educate the people'

was the first admonition addressed by Penn to the colony which he founded. 'Educate the people' was the legacy of Washington to the nation he had saved. 'Educate the people' was the unceasing exhortation of Jefferson."

The zeal of our forefathers for popular education, to which the brilliant British historian and essayist paid this high tribute, still lives in the metropolis of New England. The common school is the key-stone of the arch of our civilization.

There are now, by the latest census, 522 public schools in this city, with a corps of 1,275 teachers and 55,900 scholars. The appropriation last year for the maintenance of this large educational equipment was:—

|                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| For current expenses . . . . .   | \$1,446,007 00        |
| Repair of buildings . . . . .    | 169,500 00            |
| New buildings and site . . . . . | 135,049 00            |
| Total . . . . .                  | <u>\$1,750,556 00</u> |

With the yearly increment of about one thousand scholars, it is not to be expected that the appropriation needed for this year will be less. It is, however, gratifying to note that the net cost per pupil has been steadily lessened of late years, having fallen from \$36.54 in 1874 to \$26.98 in



1882. The people of Boston, I am satisfied, spend no money more cheerfully than that which is annually voted for the support of their public schools. Prudence in making appropriations for this object is, of course, expected; but parsimony would be unpardonable and unpardoned by our people, and especially by the great body of our working people, to whom the common schools are the perpetual pledge of equal privileges for themselves and the perennial promise and guarantee of social progress for their posterity.

#### PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Closely allied with our schools, and supplementing them in the work of popular education, is the Public Library. The Board of Trustees will, doubtless, renew this year their appeal made to the City Council of 1882, for the taking of the land on the corner of Dartmouth and Boylston streets, and the commencement of the erection of a new library building thereon. This subject should be dealt with, I submit to you, in the same broad and liberal spirit which has governed us in the past in dealing with this noble and incalculably useful institution; and I doubt not that you will dispose of it with a due sense of its inestimable

value to the city and of the growing demands made upon its resources, by the readers whose numbers steadily increase with our constantly increasing population.

## CONCLUSION.

*Gentlemen of the Council : —*

I have detained you, I fear, at tedious length with these suggestions. If I have fallen into the vice of iteration, and have seemed to repeat the word *economy* too often, I must plead, in palliation of my offence, that it is the imperial word that dominates the hour. Construing the mandate in no narrow spirit, but with a liberal and enlightened appreciation of the city's future and ultimate, as well as its present and immediate, needs, let us now resolutely address ourselves to the discharge of our duties. We are, it is proper for us to remember, called to the conduct of this municipal government under circumstances which impose upon us a special responsibility. Criticism we may not hope, and should not desire, to escape; censure we may have to endure; but let us, at least, have the satisfaction of knowing that it is undeserved. With patience, prudence, and firmness, let us perform the work committed to us

by the people, so that when the year on whose threshold we now stand has run its course we may be able, in the proud consciousness of duty well done, to wrap the mantle of our integrity around us, and making room for our successors, transmit to them the white shield of Boston as stainless as we receive it, with all her ancient civic glory undimmed, and not one jot or tittle deducted from the grand total of her historic fame.











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1884

# INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

## AUGUSTUS P. MARTIN,

MAYOR OF BOSTON, *THE LIBRARY OF THE*

BEFORE THE

APR 6 1966

*UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS*

## CITY COUNCIL,

JANUARY 7, 1884.



BOSTON:

ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS.

No. 39 ARCH STREET.

1884.



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## CITY OF BOSTON.

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IN COMMON COUNCIL, January 7, 1884.

*Ordered*, That His Honor the Mayor be requested to furnish a copy of his Address, that the same may be printed.

Sent up for concurrence.

JOHN H. LEE,

*President.*

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, January 14, 1884.

Concurred.

C. V. WHITTEN,

*Chairman.*



## ADDRESS.

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GENTLEMEN OF THE CITY COUNCIL:—

Having been selected by the citizens of Boston to administer the business affairs of the corporation for the present year, we meet to assume the trust, and to pledge ourselves to the faithful performance of our duties.

It is an occasion for congratulation that we enter upon these duties untrammelled by any party obligations; that the offices we hold are not rewards conferred for political services; that we are here as representatives of the people, irrespective of party, who have again, in an unmistakable manner, pronounced against the pernicious theory that the city government should be administered upon a partisan basis, or in the interests of any political party.

Let us remember that the City of Boston is a municipal corporation, created by law for the benefit of the public, and that we are the officers chosen to manage its affairs for the time being, as the directors

of a railroad corporation are elected by the stockholders. It is our duty, therefore, to apply the same rules to the transaction of the city's business that we would to our own, or to the business of any corporation with which we might be connected; in short, to administer the trusts confided to us as a business matter, our whole aim being to promote the interests of the community, irrespective of race, creed, or politics.

Sincerely grateful for the unexpected and unsought-for honor which has been conferred upon me, I enter upon my duties with a deep sense of responsibility, and a firm determination to do all that lies in my power to maintain our city's honored name and reputation; and in this I invoke your assistance, at the same time assuring you of my heartiest coöperation in all measures tending to promote the city's welfare.

It is not my intention to occupy your time with a detailed statement of city business. The annual reports of the several departments will soon be presented, and they contain, in a systematized form, the information which I could only give at second-hand. I shall, therefore, confine myself to some of the most important matters that I have been enabled to consider in the limited time allowed for the preparation of this address.



## FINANCE.

I invite your attention to the following statement of the financial condition of the city:—

|   |           |              |                 |
|---|-----------|--------------|-----------------|
| Gross funded debt, Dec. 31, 1882  | .         | .            | \$41,008,577 88 |
| Temporary debt, Dec. 31, 1882   | .         | .            | 97,000 00       |
|   |           |              | <hr/>           |
|   |           |              | \$41,105,577 88 |
| Add funded debt issued in 1883  | .         | .            | 3,278,500 00    |
|   |           |              | <hr/>           |
|   |           |              | \$44,384,077 88 |
| Deduct funded debt paid in 1883, \$1,742,953 92   |           |              |                 |
| Temporary debt paid in 1883,  | 97,000 00 |              | 1,839,953 92    |
|   |           |              | <hr/>           |
| Gross debt, Dec. 31, 1883 . . . . .   |           |              | \$42,544,123 96 |
| Sinking Funds, Dec. 31, 1882, \$16,068,030 42   |           |              |                 |
| Receipts during 1883  | .         | 2,244,737 19 |                 |
|   |           |              | <hr/>           |
|   |           |              | \$18,312,767 61 |
| Payments during 1883  | .         | 1,744,443 26 |                 |
|   |           |              | <hr/>           |
|   |           |              | \$16,568,324 35 |
| Bonds and mortgages, the pay-<br>ments on which are pledged to<br>the payment of debt . . . . . |           | 664,164 09   |                 |
|   |           |              | <hr/>           |
| Total redemption means, Dec. 31, 1883 . . . . .   |           |              | 17,232,488 44   |
| Net debt, Dec. 31, 1883 . . . . .   |           |              | <hr/>           |
|   |           |              | \$25,311,635 52 |
|   |           |              | <hr/>           |
| Gross debt, Dec. 31, 1883 . . . . .   |           |              | \$42,544,123 96 |
| Gross debt, Dec. 31, 1882 . . . . .   |           |              | 41,105,577 88   |
|   |           |              | <hr/>           |
| Increase . . . . .  |           |              | \$1,438,546 08  |
|   |           |              | <hr/>           |

|                                   |                     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Net debt, Dec. 31, 1883 . . . . . | \$25,311,635 52     |
| Net debt, Dec. 31, 1882 . . . . . | 24,381,025 02       |
| Increase . . . . .                | <u>\$980,610 50</u> |

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| City debt, including balance of debts assumed by acts of annexation . . . . . | \$29,252,849 98        |
| Cochituate Water Debt . . . . .   | 12,451,273 98          |
| Mystic Water Debt . . . . .   | 840,000 00             |
|   | <u>\$42,544,123 96</u> |

Loans authorized, but not issued:—

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| By City Council of 1881,—   |                       |
| Muddy-river Improvement . . . . .                                 | \$75,000 00           |
| Widening Kneeland Street . . . . .                                | 59,000 00             |
|   | <u>\$134,000 .00</u>  |
| By City Council of 1882,—   |                       |
| Improved Sewerage . . . . .                                       | 697,000 00            |
| By City Council of 1883,—   |                       |
| West Roxbury Park . . . . .                                       | \$500,000 00          |
| Library building, Dartmouth street and St. James avenue . . . . . | 450,000 00            |
| Additional Supply of Water . . . . .                              | 245,000 00            |
| Introduction of Meters and Inspection . . . . .                   | 280,000 00            |
|   | <u>1,475,000 00</u>   |
|   | <u>\$2,306,000 00</u> |

It will be seen, from the foregoing, that in 1883 the gross debt was increased \$1,438,546.08. This is an increase in the debt of 3 1-2 per cent.,

while the valuation was increased last year only 1 1-2 per cent. I am informed that the appropriations for several departments are already running short, and that it will be necessary to borrow at least one hundred thousand dollars, to meet current expenses, before the close of the present financial year.

This would be a departure from the pay-as-you-go policy, which has prevailed for many years.

The unfinished business of last year will bring before you a number of projects for public improvements, some of them involving heavy expense. This, with the prospect that additional appropriations will be required, together with the increase in the item of interest on the debt, and the usual requirements for conducting the public business, will demand on your part the exercise of the greatest economy. By economy I do not mean that parsimony which would neglect the true interests of the city to make a show of saving; or which would embarrass the public service, and throw upon future governments the burden of supplying the deficiency. I mean the economy that consists in preventing all extravagance; in carrying on business at the lowest cost consistent with efficiency; and in rejecting all projects that do not look solely to the public welfare.

As you will soon have to pass upon the estimates for the next financial year, I wish to impress upon you the necessity of scrutinizing all requests for appropriations closely; of allowing only what you find actually necessary; and then of requiring each department to keep within the limit of its appropriation. I am informed that it is not an uncommon occurrence for departments to overrun their appropriation, trusting to having an additional sum allowed towards the close of the financial year. This is unjustifiable, except in case of unforeseen emergency.

In order to illustrate this more fully I call your attention to what is called the Stony-brook Improvement.

The City Council of 1877 passed a loan-order for \$133,000, for the improvement of Stony brook, in Roxbury and West Roxbury. Since the commencement of this work there have been three annual appropriations, three transfers, and a special credit for materials sold appropriated to meet expenses; a total thus far of \$302,402.44, and it is estimated that \$25,000 more will be required to complete the work.

When a public work has been determined upon, the most careful estimates should be made, and an appropriation then provided sufficient to cover

the estimated cost. From the fact that so many public works and buildings have required additional appropriations, it would appear that proper estimates were not made. Of the nineteen appropriations made for new buildings, or extensive alterations in old buildings, during the past two years, eight have already had additional appropriations. Only *one* has been completed according to the estimate.

The following table shows the amount of the transfers made by order of the City Council during the past ten years, the amount added to the regular appropriations, and the percentage of these additions to the total of transfers:—

| Year.       | Total of<br>Transfers. | Transfers to<br>Regular Appropriations. | Percentage. |
|-------------|------------------------|---|-------------|
| 1873-74 . . | \$602,267 02           | \$348,587 90                            | 57.7        |
| 1874-75 . . | 420,970 02             | 117,731 53                              | 27.9        |
| 1875-76 . . | 714,880 97             | 255,459 40                              | 35.7        |
| 1876-77 . . | 418,398 54             | 129,298 24                              | 30.9        |
| 1877-78 . . | 211,167 50             | 122,823 02                              | 58          |
| 1878-79 . . | 171,404 32             | 135,484 75                              | 71.5        |
| 1879-80 . . | 342,187 07             | 241,597 81                              | 70.6        |
| 1880-81 . . | 270,314 35             | 192,174 25                              | 71          |
| 1881-82 . . | 229,659 07             | 165,124 38                              | 71.9        |
| 1882-83 . . | 261,010 11             | 158,803 08                              | 60.8        |

In common with other citizens my attention has been attracted to the criticisms which have from time



to time appeared in the public prints in regard to expenditures for refreshments. I am aware that the Mayor has very little control over this class of expenditures; but I deem it my duty to call your attention to the subject, with the hope that now, at the beginning of a new year, radical measures of reform may be adopted. I have grave doubts as to the legality of expending the public money for such purposes; but, be that as it may, I sincerely hope that the City Council will itself effect a reformation, and render a judicial determination of the question, or legislative intervention, unnecessary.

Our citizens do not object to any necessary expense that may be incurred in transacting public business, nor would they have the ancient reputation of the city for hospitality to those who may be entitled to municipal courtesies abated. The objection is to the abuse of the privilege; and public opinion, as well as a decent regard for official propriety, demands that such abuses shall be remedied.

#### WATER.

The cost of constructing the Water Works to May 1st, 1883, was, for the Cochituate Department, \$17,184,751.14; for the Mystic Department, \$1,641,762.22. Notwithstanding the large sums that have

been expended in the endeavor to provide an abundant supply, the consumption of water has increased so largely that, in dry seasons, the capacity of the works is not equal to the demand, and the danger of a water famine becomes imminent.

This state of things is due, not to a legitimate use of water, but to the fact that a large percentage of the supply is wilfully wasted.

The Water Board, in a report to the last City Council (City Document 173, 1883), stated the case so tersely and forcibly that I quote their remarks:—

It is an indisputable fact that at least forty per cent. of our entire water supply is wasted. It cannot be denied that, if the water which is wilfully wasted every year in Boston could be sold at our regular rates, the receipts would pay the annual interest on the whole \$20,000,000 invested in the water supply, and several hundred thousand dollars besides. No one doubts the existence of the evil, nor questions the causes thereof, or the necessity of adopting the most effective remedial measures. Other cities afflicted with the same evil have passed through the same experience, and we must be guided by their example if we expect relief.

. . . . . We believe that the consumption of water in Boston can be reduced to sixty gallons *per capita*; and if it can be done no more money will be required for new basins, or additional sources of supply, in the Cochituate Department, for a period of at least fifteen years. If immediate steps are not taken to reduce the consumption, an expenditure of \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000 will be required within the next fifteen years. If the Providence and Liverpool systems be vigorously continued, as now begun, we

believe the City of Boston will save for her citizens between two and three millions of dollars during the next thirty years.

Last year the Water Board made an energetic effort to prevent waste. A system of inspection was begun in July, and in November a saving of 3,000,000 gallons per day was reported, although only a portion of the city had been inspected. This shows that it is practicable to prevent waste, at least to a great extent; and the Water Board should be supported in its efforts in this direction.

During the past season considerable was done toward improving the condition of Basins 2 and 3, by deepening the shallow flowage and removing muck and loam. The work on Basin 4 has made good progress, and the City Engineer considers that it will be practicable to partially fill the basin during the winter and spring of 1884-85.

Among the unfinished business referred from the last City Council is the subject of purchasing the franchise and property of the Jamaica Pond Aqueduct Corporation. The Water Board believes that at the present rate of charge to its consumers, which is one-third less than city rates, the property will pay six per cent. upon an investment of \$100,000, and a proportionately higher percentage of interest if the water-rates were raised to the Boston standard. If

this be so it would be a wise investment to purchase the property, if it can be obtained for \$100,000; and I commend the subject to your early consideration.

Another matter of unfinished business that will come before you is the extension of the high-service works. The estimated cost of the work is \$778,800. The Water Board and City Engineer concur in the opinion that decisive measures should at once be taken on this subject. The temporary expedients which have been adopted to postpone the commencement of the work have been practically exhausted, and the inadequacy of the present supply is being severely felt. From an examination of a plan recently submitted to me by the City Engineer, I find that at least one-half the area of the city is dependent upon the high-service; therefore a failure in this supply would occasion much trouble, and, in case of fire, would entail disastrous consequences. I am of the opinion that the City Council should take some definite action upon the subject.

The Water Board is seeking to cure and prevent the contamination of our water supply, not only by deepening the shallow area of the basins, but by removing all sources of pollution from the streams that empty into the several reservoirs. No effort or expense should be spared in this direction.

## PUBLIC PARKS.

Work on the public parks has been actively prosecuted during the past year. On the Back Bay park the principal engineering work has been completed. One bridge remains to be built; the rest of the work consists principally of grading the surface and drive-ways, and excavating and forming the water-ways and shores. The Beacon-street and Boylston-street entrances are so far advanced that they can be completed in the spring, when Commonwealth avenue extended and Ipswich and Jersey streets can be opened for travel.

West Roxbury park was opened to the public last spring, and was visited by large numbers of people during the summer. Topographical surveys have been made with a view to the gradual improvement of this park. It is so accessible, and possesses such attractive features, that it is destined to become a favorite place of resort. In my opinion it would be wiser to increase the area, as our means will permit, than to expend large sums in making improvements.

Land for a Marine park at City Point was taken last year. Some grading has been done and a topographical survey made. A petition was presented to Congress for the cession of Castle Island, for the



purposes of this park. If the cession is made it will be desirable to connect the island with the main-land, and for this purpose application should be made to the Legislature for a grant of the flats lying between the two points. The work of constructing a driveway at Bussey park and Arnold arboretum has progressed as fast as the limited appropriation would permit. By the terms of the agreement with Harvard University the city is required to build driveways, at a cost not exceeding \$75,000. The sum of \$15,000 was appropriated last year for this work.

Land has been taken for the Charles-river embankment, and surveys and soundings made for the seawall. The act granting the right to build the wall requires that it shall be built, and the grounds filled and fitted up, before March 16, 1886.

A topographical survey has been made of Wood Island park, and plans and estimates for its improvement will, in due time, be submitted to you.

The Muddy-river improvement is in charge of the Park Department. The covered channel to convey the waters of the river, *via* Brookline avenue, to Charles river has been completed. About eleven acres of land on the banks of the river have been purchased. It is understood that the Park Commissioners of the town of Brookline are purchasing the

lands in that town which form a part of this joint improvement.

In my opinion the Common, Public Garden, and all other public squares, should be placed in charge of the Park Commissioners. I believe that the management and improvement of the public grounds can be more systematically and economically conducted by that Board than is possible under the present system.

#### PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

Among the matters referred to you by the last City Council is the subject of consolidating the pauper institutions. It is the deliberate opinion of the Directors for Public Institutions that an efficient and economical management of these institutions demands that they should be brought together. If the present system is continued an expenditure of at least \$125,000 will be necessary to meet pressing and immediate wants, with the prospect of additional appropriations being required in the near future.

The proposition is to consolidate the institutions now at Rainsford Island, Austin Farm, Charlestown Almshouse, and Marcella-street Home into one institution in some convenient locality. It, of course, needs no argument to prove that the proposition is in the line of economy as far as managing the insti-

tutions is concerned, to say nothing of saving in other ways; and I commend the subject to your early consideration.

The hospital accommodations at Deer Island are insufficient, and an improvement is imperatively demanded.

#### SCHOOLS.

According to the latest statistics the city maintains the following schools: one Normal, ten Latin and High, fifty-one Grammar, and four hundred and sixty-four Primary. Besides these the following special schools are maintained: one for Deaf-mutes, two for Licensed Minors, an Evening High School, thirteen Evening Elementary Schools, and five Evening Drawing Schools. The average number of pupils belonging to the regular day schools is 54,177; the average number belonging to the special schools is 3,350. The number of teachers employed is 1,298, of whom 191 are men and 1,107 are women. The appropriations made by the City Council for Public Schools for the present year amounted to \$1,453,061; the expenditures for the first nine months have been \$1,091,044.16, leaving an unexpended balance of \$367,016.84. The appropriation for repairs, furniture, etc., was \$169,000, and there have been

special appropriations for new buildings and alteration of old buildings made during the year.

An appropriation was made near the close of last year for establishing an Industrial School, in which elementary instruction in the mechanic arts is to be given to such of the Grammar-school boys as may choose to attend. The result of this experiment will be watched with much interest. If it succeeds in imparting to those boys who, upon leaving the Grammar Schools, at once begin to labor for their own support, a stock of practical knowledge which will fit them for the pursuits which many of them will adopt, the money will have been well expended.

The following school buildings are in process of erection: Primary school-house, corner of O and Fifth streets; Primary school-house, corner of Dorchester avenue and Harbor View street; Grammar school-house, Hammond street. An addition is being built to the old Lyman school-house for the accommodation of the East Boston High School. The George Putnam school-house is being enlarged, and an addition is being built to the Auburn school-house. A site for a Grammar school-house has been purchased in Neponset, and a site for a new school-house on Blossom street has been acquired partly by purchase and partly by right of eminent domain.

The School Committee have asked for a new

Grammar school-house in the Comins District, and for a new Primary school-house at Faneuil.

## PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The usefulness and value of this great educational institution are so well understood and appreciated that no words of mine will add to the high reputation which it already enjoys.

The proposed new building for the Reference Library will add to the security of the valuable collection of books, and will increase the usefulness of the Library by rendering it more accessible to the public, and by furnishing greater facilities for study and consultation.

Land for the site of the new building was taken last year. Three estates remain unsettled for.<sup>1</sup> Architects have been invited to submit competitive designs for the building, and premiums amounting to \$10,000 have been offered. The competition closes June 1st. The estimated expense for land and building is \$630,000.

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

The health of the city during the past year has been good. No disease has assumed an epidemic

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<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written, these estates have been purchased.



form. There have been only eight cases of small-pox, from which but one death ensued, and in no case was the disease allowed to spread. The efforts of the Board of Health, to prevent the spread of diphtheria, scarlet fever, typhoid fever, and measles, have been attended with a reasonable degree of success; but the Board has been embarrassed by the want of proper accommodations for the isolation and treatment of these diseases. In their last Annual Report the Board suggested the advisability of adding to the present City Hospital another building, of sufficient capacity to accommodate at least one hundred patients with contagious diseases, especially for the treatment of diseases of the above character. This suggestion is worthy of consideration.

The Kearsarge burial-ground was closed last year. I am of the opinion that interments should no longer be permitted within the limits of a dense population, and suggest the expediency of closing all burial-grounds in the city proper.

#### MAIN DRAINAGE WORKS.

The main drainage works, or improved system of sewerage, which have been in process of construction for several years, went into successful operation on the 1st instant. A full description of

this important work having been lately given to the public it is unnecessary for me to enter into details here. The practical working of the system will be observed with great interest, and if it meets the expectations of its projectors, and relieves the city from the great evil of defective sewerage, the work will be a monument to the ability of those who designed and those who constructed it.

The estimated cost of the work is \$5,253,000; and \$4,554,274.89 have been expended to date.

The near completion of this important work raises the question of its management in the future. As the success of the system will for many years depend upon careful engineering supervision, it should be placed in charge of those who are familiar with the details of its construction. The entire sewerage system of the city should be placed under one management, either that of a department already in existence or one to be created. This is a necessity, if economical results are to be attained, and the completion of the main drainage works appears to be a proper time for considering this question.

#### POLICE DEPARTMENT.

The Police Commissioners will renew their request for the erection of a new station-house, on the land

owned by the city, situated on the corner of Boylston and Hereford streets. The rapid growth of that portion of the city renders additional police protection necessary, and a station-house is required before a new division can be formed.

The Police Signal System now in operation in Chicago and other cities should be introduced here. It has been in successful operation for a sufficient length of time to prove its value as an adjunct to police service, to which it bears the same relation that the fire-alarm does to the Fire Department. I am informed that the appropriation for Police Department is sufficient to meet the expense of placing the apparatus in one or two divisions; and I recommend that the Police Commissioners be authorized to introduce it in at least one division, in order that the system may be thoroughly and practically tested here.

#### FIRE DEPARTMENT.

This important department of the public service is performing its duty in a manner satisfactory to the public. A new engine-house is now in process of erection on Bunker-Hill street, Charlestown, for the accommodation of an additional company in that section of the city. You will be asked to provide for the erection of an engine and hook-and-ladder house

on the lot at the corner of Boylston and Hereford streets, before alluded to in connection with the Police Department. A large number of valuable buildings have been erected in this part of the city, and the protection against fire is inadequate. A new repair-shop is needed, the present one being insufficient for the requirements of the department. A lot of land on the corner of Albany and Bristol streets was set aside for the purpose, and plans for a building were drawn; but no appropriation has yet been made for the building. By making the repairs on hose, harness, and apparatus, the department effects a large saving to the city, and it should be provided with the requisite facilities for doing the work to the best advantage.

#### BUILDING LAW.

The statutes relating to the survey and inspection of buildings need some amendments, in order to ensure safety in case of fire in family-hotels and apartment-houses. This class of buildings is largely increasing, and every precaution should be taken to prevent the spread of fire and to protect life.

#### LAMPS.

The number of electric lamps has been largely increased during the past year. The total number

now in use is 381, of which 265 were erected in 1883. An electric lamp costs \$237.25 per annum, a gas lamp \$34.00. Each electric lamp displaces on an average  $3\frac{1}{2}$  ordinary street lamps. The demand for the electric light is constantly increasing, and if it is to be satisfied the cost of lighting streets, which now amounts to about \$500,000 per annum, must be greatly increased, if not actually doubled. The electric light must be regarded as a luxury, and not a necessity. In some localities, notably the public squares or vicinity of railroad stations, it is a desirable thing to have; but I question whether a proper regard for the interests of the city will warrant its general use for street-lighting.

#### STREETS.

The appropriation for Paving Department for the present financial year was \$800,000. There have been expended to date \$709,738.61.

The appropriation for laying-out and widening streets was \$100,000. In addition to this there have been sundry special appropriations, amounting in the aggregate to \$138,300.

There has therefore been appropriated for highway purposes during the present financial year the sum of \$1,038,300. This is a large sum to



be expended in a single direction; yet there are few purposes for which the tax-payers more readily contribute than for providing and maintaining the excellent highways for which Boston is noted. But I am constrained to believe that we are progressing too fast in this direction, and that we are incurring expenditures of greater magnitude than we now realize.

In making their estimates the Street Commissioners consider only the cost of the right of way and removal of obstacles, paying no attention to the cost of construction of the roadway. There are a great many streets laid out for which the expense is estimated as nothing by the Commissioners, because the owners of the land to be taken find it for their advantage to give the right of way and to release all claims for damages. But the real cost of the streets so laid out begins when the work of the Commissioners ends. There is at once a clamor for their speedy construction; and if public safety and convenience required them to be laid out, the same considerations require them to be built. It is, of course, impossible to satisfy this demand. The Superintendent of Streets, who is charged with the work of construction, estimates that it will cost \$2,000,000 to complete the work laid out by the Street Commissioners in 1883 alone. The prospect

of a great increase in the already large expenditures for highway purposes is therefore apparent.

I am strongly of the opinion that streets should not be laid out, widened, or extended, unless the means are specially appropriated for putting them in order for public travel; and I shall be glad to approve any measures in this direction.

#### TAXATION.

The question of a high or low rate of taxation is one of vital importance to the community. The tendency of modern legislation is to exempt personal property from assessment, and to lay a tax upon real estate and tangible things only. It may be expected that, if this policy prevails, the time will come when we shall find our business interests seriously affected. We should therefore inquire into the subject, and be prepared to oppose any legislation which may be prejudicial to those interests upon which the success of the community depends.

If any departure is to be made from the long-established policy of taxing all tangible property, by whomsoever held, and all intangible and credit property, however it may be invested, the classes who are creating the wealth of the city, and employ-

ing its people, should be the first to profit by the exemption.

Following the rule that taxes all tangible property to the holder, notwithstanding it was purchased on credit, our business men are taxed on a full valuation of such property, without deduction for debts, although, the creditor being taxed for debts due him, double taxation in some cases necessarily follows. If all our copartnerships and business men were assessed only on the capital employed in their business, and were allowed whatever advantages followed their purchases upon credit, they would be relieved of a heavy burden, and their power to furnish industrial employment would be greatly increased. Such a course would not only be consistent with sound public policy, but with justice. For nearly twenty years the State, while it has taxed all other business interests upon the property purchased by the credit of its holders, has assessed business corporations upon the basis of their capital only. The effect of applying the same rule to private firms would undoubtedly be beneficial to the interests of the city.

I suggest the appointment of a special commission to consider this important subject, and report the result of their investigation, with their recommendations thereon, to the City Council, that measures

may be taken to present the subject to the Legislature.

#### ALDERMANIC DISTRICTS.

The subject of electing aldermen by districts, instead of on a general ticket, is deserving of your early consideration. I am in favor of the change, regarding it as the only practicable and satisfactory settlement of local claims to representation in that branch of the city government. When Boston was a compact city there may have been good reasons for electing aldermen on a general ticket, though even then the number of aldermen was made to correspond with the number of wards, and local claims were so strong that, without any law requiring it, an alderman was almost invariably nominated and elected from each ward. Thus, when there were but eight wards, eight aldermen were chosen; later on, when there were twelve wards, the number of aldermen was correspondingly increased. When the number of wards was again increased, by annexation, it was not deemed expedient to increase the number of the Board. Then, instead of nominating a resident of each ward, the practice of selecting a candidate from each section of the city was adopted, thus admitting the justice of

giving every locality its own representative. In this manner district representation virtually prevailed.

I therefore do not regard the proposed change as a new and untried experiment, but as a provision by law for the local representation which the people have always sought, and which has always been most satisfactory when most completely secured. The chances of election on a general ticket are, however, such that it not infrequently happens that the citizens of an important section of the city feel that they are left without representation in the Board; for, although theoretically an alderman represents the whole city, practically each alderman is regarded as specially representing the section in which he lives, and is expected by his neighbors to attend to the wants of that particular district in preference to those of other parts of the city.

Under a district system a more direct responsibility, a more accurate representation of the will of the people, would be ensured, and, by bringing the issue nearer home, our citizens would be incited to increased interest in municipal affairs.

It is also probable that many persons whose services would be of great value to the public,



but who are unwilling to enter into a contest under the present system, might be induced to become candidates if their election depended only upon the suffrages of the citizens of their own section.

#### PUBLIC WORKS.

Having been a close observer of municipal affairs for many years I have viewed with satisfaction the gradual separation of the legislative and executive functions of the city government, and the transfer of the latter to Boards of Commissioners. If I am not mistaken these changes have generally been followed by increased efficiency and greater economy. I believe that the interests of the city can be promoted by other changes in the same direction, and I invite your early attention to the expediency of reorganizing some of the related departments of the city, so as to place them under one management. I refer particularly to the departments having charge of matters connected with the public streets. The present system, by which each department carries on its operations without regard to any other, is not consistent with an economical and efficient management of the city's business.

All matters connected with laying-out and

widening streets, paving, bridges, sewers, and lamps, are so closely related that there can be no question that they could be more systematically managed by a Board of Public Works.

The Legislature would undoubtedly grant a request for authority to create such a Board.

But, if it should not be deemed advisable to create such a Board, I then recommend the adoption of such measures as will prevent any interference with the executive functions of heads of departments.

The effect of such interference is perhaps more disastrous in the Fire and Police departments, where the efficiency of the service depends upon the enforcement of discipline; but the evil is also felt in every department employing any considerable number of men.

It has even extended so far as to affect the employment of laborers on the public works. It has been publicly charged that laborers who had rendered long and faithful service to the city have been made to feel that their chance to work for their daily bread depended upon the ticket given or sold to them by some politician, or upon the contribution of a day's wages for political purposes. So long as such a condition of things

is permitted to exist the interests of the city must suffer.

I have no hesitation in saying that the system of employing workmen by distributing tickets among members of the various committees is a vicious one, both for the city and the laborer. The city owes it to its laboring men that, so long as they are faithful, and there is any work to be done, their places shall be secure. An honest day's work is all that should be required.

With reference to heads of departments I submit that men should be chosen with sole reference to their training, experience, and general fitness for the work required of them; that when so chosen they should be held to a strict accountability for the proper performance of that work, and to that end should be allowed to hire the necessary workmen, without dictation from any quarter. The loss to the city from the employment of unskilled foremen and inefficient workmen, billeted upon the heads of departments, cannot be measured by the current expenses of a single year.

*Gentlemen of the City Council:—*

I have called your attention in a somewhat cursory manner, to some of the principal matters that will

come before you during the year. If the suggestions that I have made commend themselves to your judgment, I trust they will receive early attention. I hope the business of the year will be despatched with promptness as it presents itself, and that we shall not leave a legacy of unfinished business to our successors.

And now, with the fixed purpose of advancing the interests of the city, let us address ourselves with energy to the duties before us.

















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